

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 11047 01 OF 02 070545Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07  
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13  
DHA-02 AF-10 ARA-10 /115 W  
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R 061758Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5716  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY  
USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 11047

USEEC

USOECD

E.O. 11652: NA  
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, EFIN, IT, LY  
SUBJECT: CONCLUSION OF THE UIL NATIONAL LABOR CONVENTION

REF: ROME 10747

1. SUMMARY. THE 7TH QUADRENNIAL NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE LAY  
LABOR CONFEDERATION UIL CONCLUDED IN BOLOGNA JULY 3 WITH THE  
ORGANIZATION DIVIDED BUT INTACT. GIORGIO BENVENUTO WAS CONFIRMED  
AS SECRETARY GENERAL ALTHOUGH THE REPUBLICAN FACTION ABSTAINED IN  
THE VOTE FOR THE TOP UIL POSITION. THE POLICY DOCUMENT ADOPTED  
BY THE CONVENTION DEVIATED ONLY NOMINALLY FROM THE PRINCIPLES  
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PAGE 02 ROME 11047 01 OF 02 070545Z

ENUNCIATED BY BENVENUTO IN HIS KEYNOTE ADDRESS. THE CONVENTION WAS  
HIGHLIGHTED BY TWO DEVELOPMENTS: AN ACERBIC EXCHANGE BETWEEN  
BENVENUTO AND LAMA, COMMUNIST LEADER OF THE CGIL, IN WHICH BENVENUTO  
ACCUSED THE COMMUNISTS OF SEEKING TO DOMINATE THE LABOR MOVEMENT,  
AND OF CLOSELY FOLLOWING PCI POLICY IN THEIR COOPERATIVE RELATIONS  
WITH THE MINORITY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT; AND A LIMITED  
BUT DISTINCT ALIENATION OF THE REPUBLICANS OCCASIONED BY THE

EXTENT TO WHICH THE UIL SOCIALISTS SOUGHT TO TRANSFORM THE CONVENTION INTO A PSI RALLY. THE PROSPECTS ARE THAT THE UIL, UNDER BENVENUTO'S EXTROVERTED LEADERSHIP, WILL CONTINUE TO ACT THE GADFLY ON THE ITALIAN LABOR SCENE, DISCOMFOTING BOTH THE COMMUNISTS AND THE GOVERNMENT WITH EVENHANDED ABANDON AND GENERALLY SERVING PSI PURPOSES, WHATEVER THEY MAY PROVE TO BE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE UIL, SMALLEST OF THE THREE MAJOR ITALIAN LABOR CONFEDERATIONS AND THE LAST OF THE THREE TO CONVENE, ENDED ON JULY 33 WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE ORGANIZATION'S POLICY DOCUMENT, AND THE ELECTION OF THE NEW LEADERSHIP. DESPITE THE VERITABLE NIAGARA OF VERBIAGE EXPENDED DURING THE FIVE DAYS, THE POLICY STATEMENT VARIED IN NO SIGNIFICANT WAY FROM THE DOCTRINES LAID DOWN BY SECRETARY GENERAL BENVENUTO IN HIS EXTENSIVE KEYNOTE ADDRESS. THE DOCUMENT WAS PASSED BY THE COMBINED VOTES OF THE SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. A SEPARATE DOCUMENT, PUT FORWARD BY THE DISAFFECTED REPUBLICANS LED BY EX-SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI, RECEIVED LESS THAN 25 PERCENT OF THE DELEGATE VOTE.

3. THE UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED SECRETARIAT CONSISTS OF FIVE SOCIALISTS (BENVENUTO, RAVENNA, TORDA AND MANFRON PLUS BUGLI IN PLACE OF PECCI), THREE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (RAVECCA PLUS BUTTINELLI AND ZONI REPLACING MUCI AND PAGANI) AND THREE REPUBLICANS (VANNI, ROSSI AND LUCIANI). THE 155-MAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ENLARGED FROM 109, CONTAINS 77 SOCIALISTS, WITH THE REMAINING 78 SEATS SPLIT BETWEEN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS. DESPITE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ROME 11047 01 OF 02 070545Z

THEIR ABSOLUTELY MAJORITY IN OVERALL UIL MEMBERSHIPS, THE SOCIALISTS DECLINED TO PRESS FOR A MAJORITY OF THE SECRETARIAT AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE SLOTS. IN THE VOTE FOR SECRETARY GENERAL, THE REPUBLICANS IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ABSTAINED OUT OF PROTEST FOR WHAT THEY REGARD AS BENVENUTO'S ATTEMPT TO TRANSFORM THE UIL INTO A SOCIALIST SATRAPY.

4. IN HIS KEYNOTE ADDRESS (REFTEL) BENVENUTO DIRECTED A SERIES OF CRITICISMS AGAINST THE CGIL AND THE PCI. HE OPPOSED THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE, CRITICIZED COMMUNIST HEGEMONIZATION OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT, INVIDIOUSLY COMPARED CGIL AUTONOMY WITH THAT EVIDENCED BY THE CISL, AND "DEFINITELY RENOUNCED" ORGANIC UNITY (I.E., MERGER) OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT. (PARA 7B OF REFTEL SHOULD READ "DEFINITIVE RENUNCIATION" RATHER THAN "REAFFIRMATION"). THESE AND OTHER COMMENTS HAD CLEARLY DISCOMFITED LAMA, AND CGIL DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL MARIANETTI (PSI), WHO NEITHER APPLAUDED BENVENUTO'S SPEECH NOR OFFERED THEIR HANDS IN GREETING.

5. IN TAKING THE FLOOR THE FOLLOWING DAY, LAMA DENIED THAT THE CGIL PRACTICES "IRONCLAD INTERNAL MONOLITHISM" AND CLAIMED IT WAS AN AUTONOMOUS AS ANY OF THE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS. AUTONOMY, LAMA ASSERTED, DID NOT PRECLUDE SUPPORT FOR THE HISTORIC

COMPROMISE. "WE AIM, AND I SAY THIS OPENLY, FOR A MORE ADVANCED POLITICAL FRAMEWORK," LAMA CONTINUED. IN ANY EVENT, "JUST AS THE CGIL DOES NOT EXPRESS ITSELF IN OPPOSITION TO THE LEFT ALTERNATIVE, IT SEEMS ABSURD TO OPPOSE THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE UNDER THE GUISE OF ASSERTING AUTONOMY," LAMA DECLARED.

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PAGE 01 ROME 11047 02 OF 02 062315Z  
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 11047

HE ALSO SPOKE OUT STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF BOTH ORGANIC UNITY AND PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN THE TRICONFEDERATIONAL CCU. "NO MORE CONVINCING PROOF OF DEDICATION TO (LABOR) UNITY IS POSSIBLE THAN THIS: TO RENOUNCE THE RETENTION OF ONE'S OWN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IN FAVOR OF THE UNIFIED ORGANIZATION," HE SAID. FURTHER, "WE ARE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD OVERCOMING (THE PROBLEM OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION) WITHOUT ARROGANCE AND WITHOUT RESORT TO MERE NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY, WHICH WE WOULD NOT BRING INTO PLAY EVEN THOUGH WE WERE TO CONSTITUTE AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY."

6. AT THE END OF HIS REMARKS WHICH WERE THE MOST CANDID LAMA HAS BEEN HEARD TO EXPRESS IN A LONG TIME, HE WAS GREETED WITH GREAT APPLAUSE AND EMBRACED BY BENVENUTO. SUBSEQUENT SOCIALIST SPEAKERS CONTINUED TO SNIPE AT LAMA. THUS, MATTINA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UIL METAL WORKERS (UILM), SAID "IN OUR ORGANIZATION WE EVEN EMBRACE THOSE WHO DIFFER FROM US." NATIONAL SECRETARY RAVENNA

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PAGE 02 ROME 11047 02 OF 02 062315Z

REJECTED LAMA'S "GIFT" OF PROMISING NOT TO IMPOSE HIS MAJORITY IN A UNIFIED LABOR MOVEMENT: "DEMOCRACY IS NOT A GIFT, MINORITY RIGHTS ARE NOT BESTOWED," RAVENNA NOTED.

7. GROWING RESENTMENT AMONG THE REPUBLICAN DELEGATES AGAINST THE INCREASING TRANSFORMATION OF THE CONVENTION INTO A THINLY-DISGUISED SOCIALIST RALLY FINALLY BROKE OUT ON JULY 2. THOUGH BENVENUTO HAD INVEIGHED AGAINST THE ABSENCE OF AUTONOMY IN THE CGIL, THE POLICIES ESPOUSED BY HIMSELF AND THE PSI PARTICIPANTS CLEARLY CAME OUT OF THE PSI CATECHISM. WHILE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL SECRETARY LUCIANI WAS SPEAKING, PSI SECRETARY BETTINO CRAXI WALKED INTO THE AUDITORIUM, STOPPING THE SHOW AND LEADING TO PROLONGED STANDING CHEERS. THIS, IN TURN, PROVOKED LOUD SHOUTS AND SOME SHOVING FROM THE REPUBLICANS WHO WERE NOT MOLLIFIED UNTIL EX-SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI CAME DOWN FROM THE ROSTRUM TO PLEAD FOR CALM.

8. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS WERE THESE:

A) BENVENUTO'S CRITICISM OF THE SUPPRESSION OF DISSENT IN EASTERN EUROPE LED THE POLISH DELEGATES (THERE WERE ALSO OTHERS FROM HUNGARY AND THE USSR) TO WALK OUT OF THE CONVENTION, DENOUNCING THE UIL'S ESPOUSAL OF "THE CRIMINAL ACTS OF CONVICTS," SAYING IT WAS NONE OF THE UIL'S BUSINESS AND THAT ANYHOW THE UIL HAD SUFFICIENT PROBLEMS OF ITS OWN TO WHICH TO ATTEND.

B) EVERY MENTION OF THE FORMATION OF A POLICE UNION, UNDER THE CCU BANNER, WAS A SIGNAL FOR ENTHUSIASTIC APPLAUSE. STAR PERFORMER ON THIS SUBJECT WAS POLICE CAPTAIN MARGHERITO (ROME'S A-383) WHO TWICE ADDRESSED THE CONVENTION. MARGHERITO IS STILL UNDER SUSPENSION FOR FOMENTING POLICE DISCONTENT.

:) STRONG THOUGH UNFOCUSED CRITICISM OF THE PROGRAM ACCORDS  
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PAGE 03 ROME 11047 02 OF 02 062315Z

REACHED BETWEEN THE POLITICAL PARTIES CONTINUED VIRTUALLY UNABATED THROUGHOUT THE CONVENTION, PAUSING ONLY TO DIGEST THE FACT THAT THE DC RIGHT WAS ALSO STRONGLY CRITICAL OF THE ACCORDS.

D) THE SHAMEFUL TREATMENT OF IRVING BROWN AND THE AFL-CIO (REFTEL) STOOD OUT THE MORE STARKLY WHEN ONE REFLECTED ON THE PRESENCE OF COMMUNIST-BLOC "LABOR" DELEGATES AND THE FACT THAT VENVENUTO HAD RECENTLY VISITED LIBYAN CHIEF OF STATE GHEDAFFI IN TRIPOLI (ROME'S 8527). ACCORDING TO MALICIOUS CORRIDOR GOSSIP

AMONG NEWSPAPERMEN, THE LAVISH HAND WITH WHICH THE CONVENTION WAS RUN (E.G., EXPENSIVE "FAVORS" DISTRIBUTED TO THE FOREIGN GUESTS) RESULTED FROM BENVENUTO'S PILGRIMAGE TO THE PETRODOLLAR POTENTATE.

9. COMMENT. ONE OF THE DISCOURAGING ASPECTS OF THE CONVENTION WAS THE THICK OVERLAY OF A KIND OF HALF-BAKED MARXIST BIAS IN THE COMMENTS

OF MOST OF THOSE WHO SPOKE. THIS FOUND EXPRESSION IN FREQUENT DENUNCIATIONS OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND OF THE UNREMITTING INIQUITIES OF EMPLOYERS IN GENERAL, OR THE ATTRIBUTION BY SOCIALIST PARLIAMENTARIAN CICCHITTO OF AMERICAN PROSPERITY TO IMPERIAL EXPLOITATION OF THE THIRD WORLD. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT WAS ENCOURAGING TO HEAR, IN THIS LOADED CLIMATE, THE RESERVATIONS VOICED BY BOTH MATTINA AND VANNI TO THE AUTOMATIC AND FREQUENT RESORT TO GENERAL STRIKES AS A MEANS OF RESOLVING LABOR DIFFICULTIES.

AS ALWAYS, VENVENUTO SEEMED UBIQUITOUS, AND INDEFATIGABLE. WHEN NOT TALKING OR CONSULTING WITH DELEGATES, HE WAS SEEING TO ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS, CIRCULATING, ON THE GO UNTIL LATE AT NIGHT. GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

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